(b) There can be no justification for terrorism and it must be eradicated wherever it exists. Government is firmly committed to fight the menace of cross border terrorism till it is decisively eliminated.

India has also made it clear to Pakistan that conducive atmosphere for a sustained dialogue necessarily required an end to cross border terrorism and dismantling of the infrastructure of support to terrorism in Pakistan.

Extremist activities from Nepal

2650. DR. A.R. KIDWAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Nepal had become haven for criminals and a large number of extremists activities are operating in Nepal;

(b) if so, whether India and Nepal have signed an agreement to share criminal intelligence through diplomatic channels;

(c) if so, to what extent this has helped both the countries to check the criminal menace operating for long in India and Nepal; and

(d) the further steps being taken to improve the situation of controlling the criminal activities in both the countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) to (d) Government of India is concerned about misuse of the open India-Nepal border by terrorist and criminal elements for activities inimical to India's interest and is seized of the matter. There is close co-operation between Nepal and India and both countries have stated that they would not allow their territory to be used fo activities inimical to the interests of either country. Measures have been taken to enhance co-operation with Nepal, including in the field of intelligence and effective border management. A bilateral institutional mechanism has also been evolved which includes a Joint Working Group on Border Management and Home Secretary Level Talks to address issues relating to maintenance of peace and security and prevention of criminal activities in the India-Nepal border areas. Regular dialogue of Customs officials also takes place under the Agreement for Co-operation to control Unauthorised Trade. The Special Service Bureau has been deployed along the border with Nepal to strengthen security in

the border aeas. These measures are contributing to improved border management and prevention of criminal and subversive activities.

2. The extradition arrangements between India and Nepal are presently governed by the Treaty of Extradition of 1953. The Government of India has proposed that the Treaty be updated and has initiated discussions with His Majesty's Government of Nepal in this regard. The Government of India has also entered into discussions with HMGN on conclusion of Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters. The first round of discussions on the Extradition Treaty and the Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters between GOI and HMGN was held in Kathmandu on February 16-19, 2003. Conclusion of these agreements would further strengthen the institutional legal arrangements between India and Nepal for effectively combating crime and terrorism.

Perks to lower staff in Indian missions

2651. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA:
SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether CAG has indicted the Ministry for bonus and other perks being given to the lower staff in various Indian mission abroad, especially in Europe;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reason for extra privileges to them and remedial measures proposed to be taken to rectify the irregularities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH); (a) CAG had included an audit para in his report no. 2 of 1999 pointing out that there had been inadmissible payment of bonus to locally recruited employees of the Mission/Posts in the USA.

(b) In December 1997, bonus of one month's salary or US$ 1000/-, whichever was less, was paid to locally recruited employees of Mission/ Posts in the USA. Audit had taken the view that there was no requirement to pay bonus as it was not in accordance with the local practice.

(c) The Ministry is of the view that payment of one month's bonus to local employees was in keeping with local practice. The Mission/Posts in